



**CASCADE COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**January 24, 2017**  
**COMMISSION CHAMBERS**  
**COURTHOUSE ANNEX, ROOM 111**  
**9:30 A.M.**

**Notice:** These minutes are paraphrased and reflect the proceedings of the Board of Commissioners. MCA 7-4-2611 (2) (b). These minutes were officially approved at the February 28, 2017 meeting.

**Commission:** Chairman Jim Larson, Commissioner Jane Weber, and Commissioner Joe Briggs.

**Present:** Annette Kniffer, Michelle Bowser, Kim Hawn, Gary Zadick, Randy McIntire, Don S. Miller, Don Feist, Wiley Barker, Ronald Gessaman, Mary Nicholson, Amy Berg Pickett, Tom Lorang, Rodney Blake, Sheila Rice, Austin Walker, Jo-Viviane Jones, Sarah Converse, Jodie Campbell, Andrew Blewett, Mike Dalton, Carrie Koppy, Deb Baker, Melissa Darko, Becky Dubiekzyk, Mary Embleton, Bonnie Fogerty, Carey Ann Haight, Patty Boyle, Marty Harvie, Rachel Shane, Ryan Pachek, Diana Johnson, Fred Johnson, Sandra Prichard, Burton Prichard, James McKinney, Ann Rockwell, Nick Rockwell, Joe Murphy, Eileen Hyndman, Buster Hyndman, Erin Merchant, Trixie Smith, Steve Erwin, Alex Dachs, Don Sims, Tanya Houston, Bonnie Fogerty, and Marie Johnson.

**Reading of the Commissioners calendar:** Bonnie Fogerty read the weekly calendar.

**Treasurer's Monthly Report of Bank Balances, Investments, Revenues, and Disbursements.** Patty Boyle read this report, which can be found in Agenda packet dated January 24, 2017.

**Purchase orders and accounts payable warrants:** Commissioner Weber made a **MOTION** to approve purchase orders and accounts payable checks #271723 thru #271872 totaling \$1,064,380.43 dated 01/03/2017 thru 01/06/2017. Approved purchase orders and accounts payable checks #271873 through #272123 totaling \$1,324,235.80 dated 01/09/2017 thru 01/13/2017. **Motion carries 3-0**

**Consent agenda:** The consent agenda is made up of routine day-to-day items that require Commission action. Any Commissioner may pull items from the Consent Agenda for further discussion/vote.

**Approval of the Minutes and Consent Agenda Items:** Commissioner Larson made a **MOTION** to approve minute entries December 27, 2016, January 4, 2017, and January 10, 2017. In addition, routine resolutions and contracts as follows;

**Board Appointments:**

**Historic Preservation Advisory** Carol Bronson 4/30/2019 (Fill remainder of term vacated by Ryan Smith)

**Black Eagle Fire District** Douglas Coster 5/31/2019 (Fill remainder of term vacated by Don Hesse)

♦ **Contract 17-03:** Joseph Eve Letter of Engagement to prepare Cascade County's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Year Ending: June 30, 2016. Total Fee not to exceed: \$11,000. R0334638

**CITY/COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

♦ **Resolution 17-08:** Budget Appropriation for Healthy Montana Families Program for \$316,204 plus an additional \$17,500 of anticipated Target Case Management revenue. Total Amount: \$316,204. R0334639

♦ **Contract 17-02:** MT DPHHS Task Order 17-07-4-51-109-0, HIV Treatment Program Purpose: To deliver Early Intervention Services (EIS) for both persons at risk for infection and those living with HIV. Effective Dates: January 15, 2017 - September 30, 2017. Total Compensation: \$17,150. R0335182

♦ **Resolution 17-09:** Budget Appropriation for additional services funded for HIV Treatment. Effective Dates: January 15, 2017- September 30, 2017. Total Amount: \$17,150. (Ref: Contract 17-02) R0334640

**Motion to approve consent agenda carries 3-0.**

**Public Comment:**

**Ron Gessaman 1006 36<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Great Falls** questioned Contract 17-03 asking if the CAFR was due last December. He was informed that it was not due in December.

**AGENDA ITEM #1**

**MOTION TO APPROVE/DISAPPROVE: Contract 17-10 R0335273**

**Resolution 17-10: Approving a tax benefit for a new or expanding industry. Black Eagle Solar, LLC**

**Public Hearing Application for a New or Expanding Industry**

**Classification.** The application would provide potential tax abatements for the construction of a solar energy product producing more than 1 MW of electrical energy; 3MWac/4.2MWdc at 101 Black Eagle Road, Great Falls, Montana.

Submitted by: Black Eagle Solar, LLC.

**Chairman Larson** opened the public hearing at 9:43 a.m. and recessed the regular meeting.

**Reading of the Public Notice**

The reading of the public notice was waived without objections and made part of the record (see exhibit "A").

**Staff Presentation**

**Carey Ann Haight** read the background for this tax benefit, which can be found in the Agenda packet dated January 24, 2017.

**Call for Applicant**

**Chairman Larson** called for the Applicant.

**Wiley Barker** 900 N. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, thank the Commission for an opportunity to speak representing Black Eagle Solar, LLC. He spoke about the

benefits of supporting his tax benefit for this Solar Farm, and presented an example of what the tax base currently is and an estimate of what the County could expect in the future, see exhibit "B".

**Mr. Barker** then requested that **Amy Berg-Pickett** of 857 SE Kristen Way, Helena to present her power point presentation on the Solar Farm, see Exhibit "C".

**Ms. Berg-Pickett**, highlighted the local benefits, community impact, and proposed site plan. She then welcomed questions from the Commission.

**Commissioner Briggs** asked if there was potential plans to expand by purchasing more land

**Ms. Berg-Pickett**, stated that at this time there was no business model to expand and at this time regulations are only for 30 (thirty) acres.

**Chairman Larson** asked if they were leasing or buying the 30 acres. She replied by informing him that they have purchased the 30 acres.

**Commissioner Weber** requested how they will be handling the noxious weeds.

**Ms. Berg-Pickett** announced that they would be good neighbors and plan to reseed the sight with appropriate short grasses and work with the County Weed Department for weed abatement.

**Chairman Larson** asked what would happen if this solar plant were to close and need to be cleaned up.

**Ms. Berg-Pickett** stated that the salvage would be more of a recycling project at the end of the 30-40 year life span, and with the recycled materials, they felt no need for bonding. She also stated that since they follow all regulations the risk for closure.

**Chairman Larson** called for Proponents.

**Ron Gessaman** announced that he usually is not in support of tax abatements, but he has spoken with Amy and has no concerns. He encouraged the Commission to vote in favor of this abatement.

**Austin Walker** of Great Falls Development Authority stated that Montana has a need for infrastructure to increase the tax base. This would be the first solar farm in Cascade County with a minimum impact. He requested that Commission realize that this company has already invested in our community and he would like to would like to encourage more projects in Cascade County like this one.

**Sarah Converse** of Sweet Grass Development encourage the Commission to approve this tax abatement, which is a great opportunity for Cascade County.

**Chairman Larson** called for Proponents three times in which there was no more.

**Chairman Larson** called for Opponents three times in which there was none.

**Chairman Larson** called for Informational Witnesses three times in which there was none.

### **Close of the Public Hearing**

**Chairman Larson** closed the Public Hearing at 10:15 a.m. and reconvened the regular meeting.

### **Call for a Motion**

**Commissioner Weber** made a **MOTION** to approve Resolution 17-10 and sign the application of Black Eagle Solar, LLC for a tax abatement. **Motion carries 3-0**

## **AGENDA ITEM #2**

### **Public Hearing Application for a New or Expanding Industry**

**Classification.** The application would provide potential tax abatements for the remodeling, reconstruction or expansion of commercial property commonly recognized as “Super 1 Foods” which is located at 3160 10th Avenue South, Great Falls, Montana. Submitted by: Robert Zadick & Richard Zadick.

### **Motion to Approve or Disapprove:**

**Resolution 17-11:** R0334538

### **Approving a tax benefit for a new or expanding industry. Robert Zadick & Richard Zadick (Super1 Foods)**

**Chairman Larson** opened the public hearing at 10:17 a.m. and recessed the regular meeting.

### **Reading of the Public Notice**

The reading of the public notice was waived without objections and made part of the record (see exhibit “D”).

### **Staff Presentation**

**Carey Ann Haight** read the background for this tax benefit, which can be found in the Agenda packet dated January 24, 2017.

### **Call for Applicant**

**Chairman Larson** called for the Applicant.

**Gary Zadick** 2 Railroad Square stated that this tax abatement is for Super 1 Foods, which the Department of Revenue requested that it be approved by the Commission although it has already been approved by the City of Great Falls in June 2016.

**Randy McIntire** 12605 N. Spike Trail Hayden Lake, Idaho whom is leasing the property and had worked to bring the new store up to code. He stated that the City of Great Falls has approved this abatement and he requested the Commission’s approval, which will be a great improvement to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South.

**Chairman Larson** called for Proponents three times in which there was none.

**Chairman Larson** called for Opponents.

**Ron Gessaman** spoke in opposition of this when it came before the City of Great Falls Commission. He felt that this was sketchy because no revenues were given.

**Chairman Larson** called for Opponents for three times in which no one else spoke in opposition.

**Chairman Larson** called for Informational Witnesses three times in which there was none.

**Chairman Larson** closed the public hearing at 10:28 a.m. and reconvened the regular meeting.

**Commissioner Briggs** announced that there is ambiguity in the law and the Department of Revenue changing the rules midstream when this tax abatement has been approved six months ago by the City of Great Falls Commission.

**Chairman Larson** clarified that the tax abatement is for the owners of the property not the lessees of the property.

**Chairman Larson** called for a motion

**Commissioner Briggs** made a **MOTION** to approve Resolution 17-11 and sign the application of Robert Zadick and Richard Zadick for a tax abatement. **Motion carries 3-0**

### **AGENDA ITEM #3**

#### **Public Hearing for the CDBG Community Development Needs Assessment**

**Chairman Larson** opened the public hearing at 10:30 a.m. and recessed the regular meeting.

#### **Reading of the Public Notice**

The reading of the public notice was waived without objections and made part of the record (see exhibit "E").

#### **Staff Presentation**

**Mary Embleton** read the synopsis found in agenda packet dated January 24, 2017.

**Chairman Larson** called for input from the public on community needs.

**Andrew Blewitt** from the Rivers Edge Trail Foundation thanked the Commission for their support of the Trail. He reminded the Commission of the many opportunities to improve and maintain the Rivers Edge Trail.

**Sheila Rice** Neighbor Works Director began with this statement "Home is where jobs go home to sleep at night." She also stated that she appreciated the Commission for their help with the upcoming housing communities and the water system in Trailer Terrace.

**Melissa Darko represented Mercy Home/YMCA** stated that they served 159 woman and children with 13,855 crisis calls. She requested that the Commission support any program that would assist their clients in finding suitable housing once released from the Mercy Home, which has a 60-day stay limit.

**Don Miller of Saint Vincent De Paul** stated that the areas of need in Cascade County are hunger and homelessness. They serve 50,000 pounds of food a month and have a need for expansion to reach the rural areas. They also visit the 23 homelessness encampments to make sure that they are warm. He also spoke of the success of the Grace Home for Veterans. In closing, Mr. Miller encourage the Commission to support with any of the agencies that promote independent living and announced that they work closely with all the agencies in the community.

**Don Feist of Trailer Terrace** informed the Commission that Phase 1 and 2 of their new water and sewer system has been completed which has taken 8 years, and are in Phase 3 at this time. He thanked the Commission for their support all the help they have given them.

**Jodi Campbell Town of Cascade** announced that they are in the process of updating their Growth Policy and during this process; they found a need for a multi-family housing. She encouraged the Commission to assist them in the planning for multi-family housing and the completion of their sewer projects.

**Commissioner Briggs** questioned how many multi-family housing projects were they are looking for.



**Ms. Campbell** stated that she would know more at their upcoming meeting, which is scheduled for February 9, 2017, and she invited the Commission to attend.

**Tom Lorang Eden Community Hall** began by giving the history of this Community Hall stating that it has been used for 97 years and is in need of some repairs to keep the historical building going. He requested that the Commission consider helping them.

**Ron Gessaman** highlighted the Missoula County whom bought into solar energy projects and once they were purchased, were able to have free energy. He encouraged the Commission to consider this.

**Carrie Koppy of Rural Development Improvement** noted that she was not highlighting any specific project but urged the Commission to support any work towards anti-poverty.

**Michelle Bowser of Opportunities Inc.** announced that they have been serving five (5) Counties over 50 years. She noted that the main needs in the Community are affordable safe housing, childcare and health care and encourage the Commission to support these endeavors.

**Kim Hawn of Family Connections** stated that they serve families with financial assistance to help with childcare. She presented a letter to the Commission describing the needs (see Exhibit "F").

**Sarah Converse of Sweet Grass Development** thanked the Commission for holding this meeting early so this information can be used for other grant writing projects.

**Becky Dubieczyk of Vaughn Water and Sewer District** updated the Commission on their progress on their water system and requested the Commissioners support on their project.

**Mike Dalton of 1917 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North** presented a food hub program that would not be a handout program but a hand up program to provide affordable food from local producers not food trucks.

**Rodney Blake of TD&H** presented the Simms County Water District Wastewater System Improvements Phase II (see Exhibit "G"). He requested that the Commission consider the CDBG grant funding that enable the district to protect and repair their wastewater treatment system.

**Desiree Blaire of Rural Dynamics Inc.** spoke about Gap families that are on the edge of the cliff by having an income slightly higher than low income having difficulties with housing, food and childcare. She requested the Commissioners support in wrap around services that would help those coming off assistance programs.

**Chairman Larson** called for any more speakers in which there was none.

**Chairman Larson** closed the public hearing and recessed the regular meeting at 11:29 a.m.

**Chairman Larson** thanked everyone and stated that all information will be taken into consideration.

**Public Participation in decisions of the Board and allowance of public comment on matters the Commission has jurisdiction, on items not covered by Today's agenda. (MCA 2-3-103)**

**Ron Gessaman** commented about the increased number of people in attendance on the Community Needs Hearing. He also questioned the progress on the Commission meetings recording and broadcasting.

Chairman Larson stated that they were in the process of looking at bids for a video system that will work.

**Adjournment:** Chairman Larson adjourned this Commission meeting at 11:35 a.m.